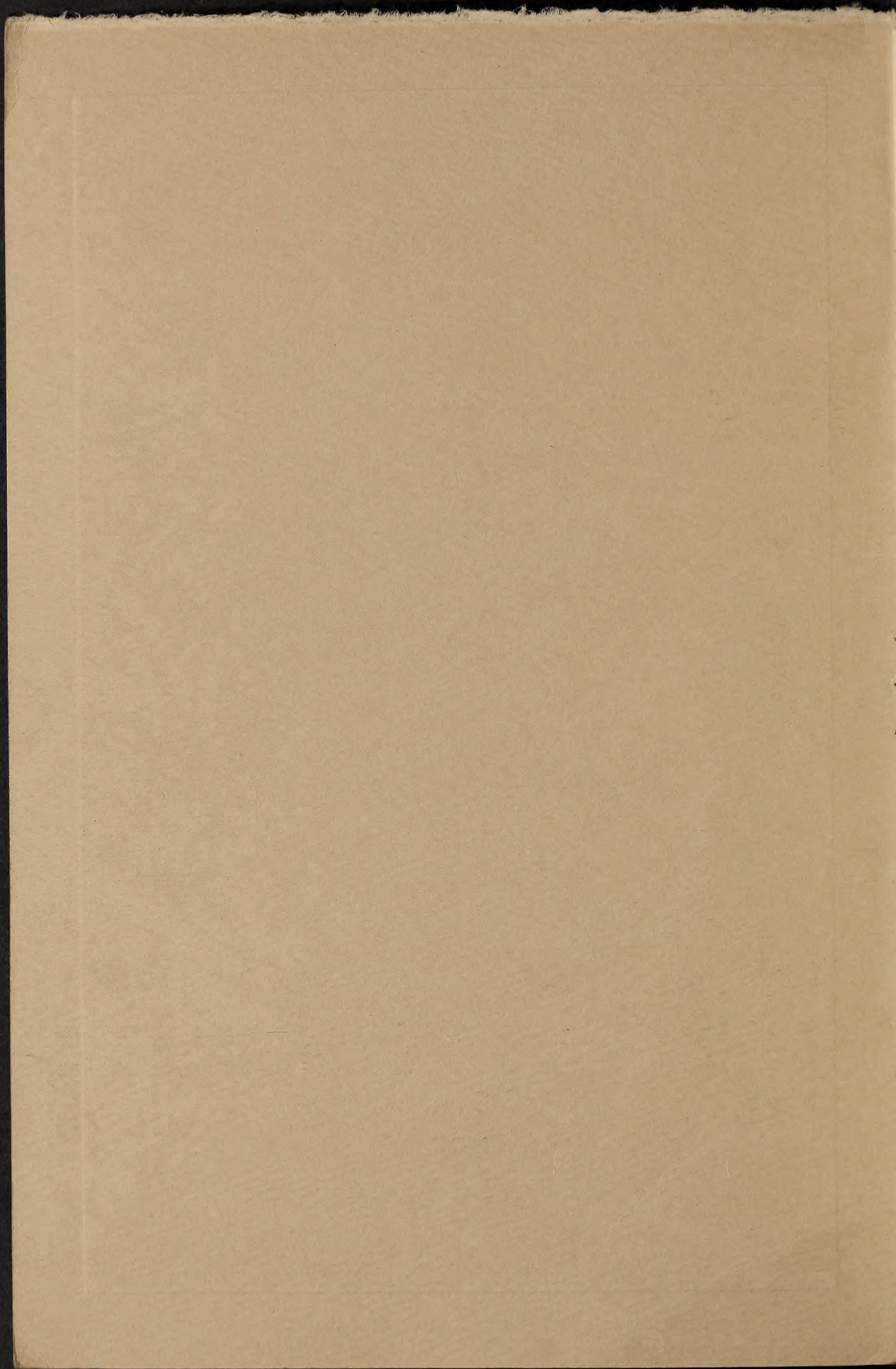


THE FAIRY GODMOTHER
OF CHAMBER MUSIC





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EXTRACTS FROM THE ADDRESS OF
MR. EDWIN T. RICE
AT THE UNVEILING OF THE
BRONZE PORTRAIT OF
MRS. ELIZABETH S. COOLIDGE
AT THE
TEMPLE OF CHAMBER MUSIC
SOUTH MOUNTAIN
PITTSFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

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IFTEEN years ago at this season of the year, South Mountain was merely one of the loveliest of countless Berkshire Hills—a place of quiet sylvan beauty but, otherwise, unknown to fame. A month later, in September 1918, South Mountain had become one of the loftiest peaks in the entire domain of chamber music. This miracle was wrought by the indomitable spirit of Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge. With a faith like unto that which removes mountains, Mrs. Coolidge, amid the agonies of a war which seemed never-ending, dreamed of a world at peace in which the healing message of music would again be heard. And so she assembled here an international Congress of Musicians and music lovers to do honor to chamber music amid the splendors of our autumn foliage. That was the first event of its kind in the annals of music. It transformed South Mountain into what I like to call the Baireuth of chamber music. It was at the same time one of the most original contributions ever made by a woman to the cultural life of her country.

These festivals became annual events and twelve years ago, a bronze tablet was here presented to Mrs. Coolidge to commemorate their establishment.

Since then, much has happened here and elsewhere which deserves to be even more personally commemorated. Eight years ago, Mrs. Coolidge built an auditorium adjacent to the Congressional Library in Washington, and provided the nation with a generous fund to provide for the expense of continuing the international festivals as national functions throughout the future. The musical life of South Mountain was not,

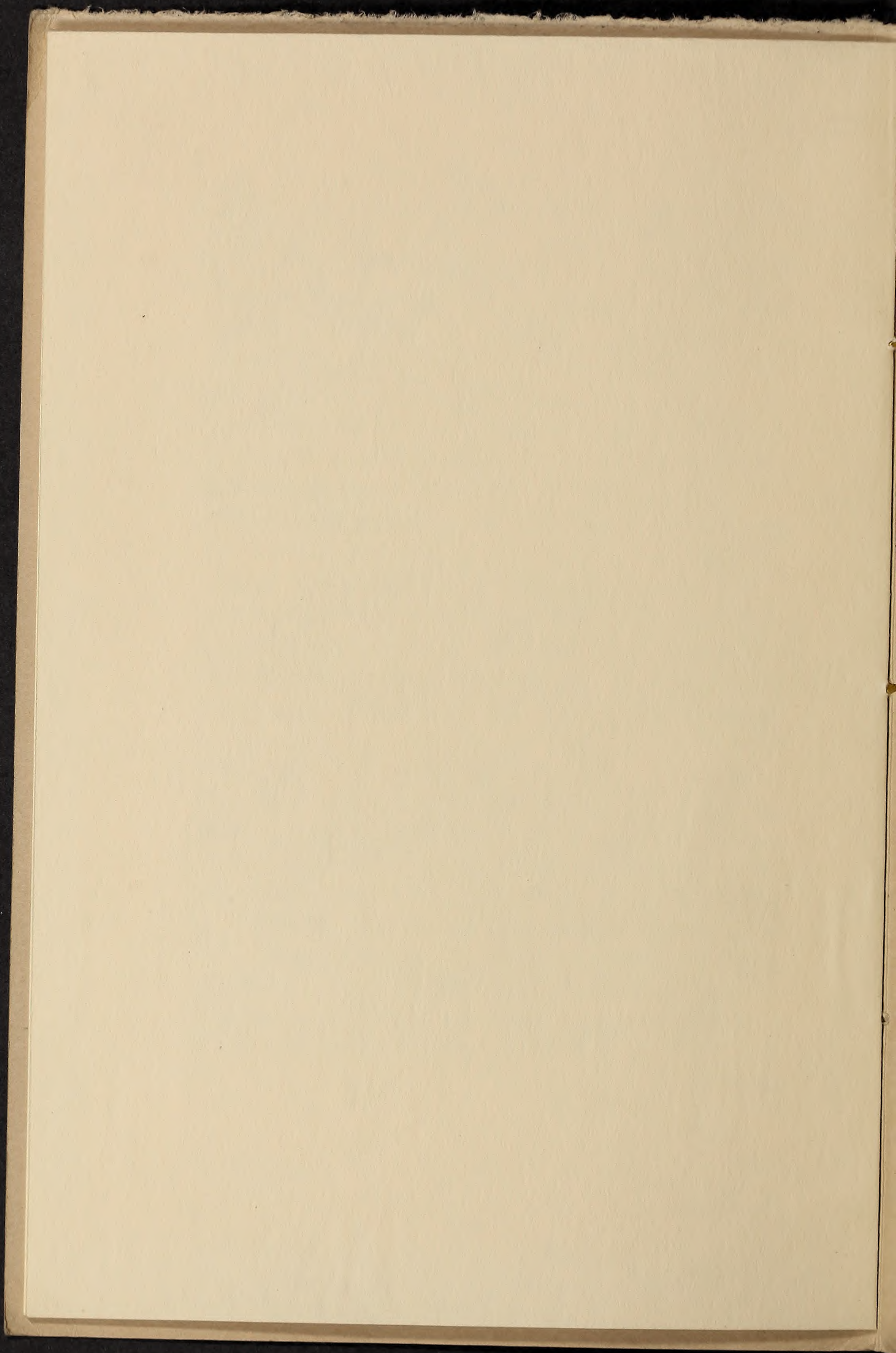
however, abandoned. Believing that chamber music was no less uplifting in summer than in winter, Mrs. Coolidge inaugurated here courses of concerts lasting throughout the summer season, and with rare musical judgment, entrusted the directorship of South Mountain to the foremost chamber musician, Willem Willeke for life. The South Mountain Quartet founded by her in 1924 has given us, season after season, programs of the deepest interest, variety, and importance, interpreted with matchless spirit and distinction.

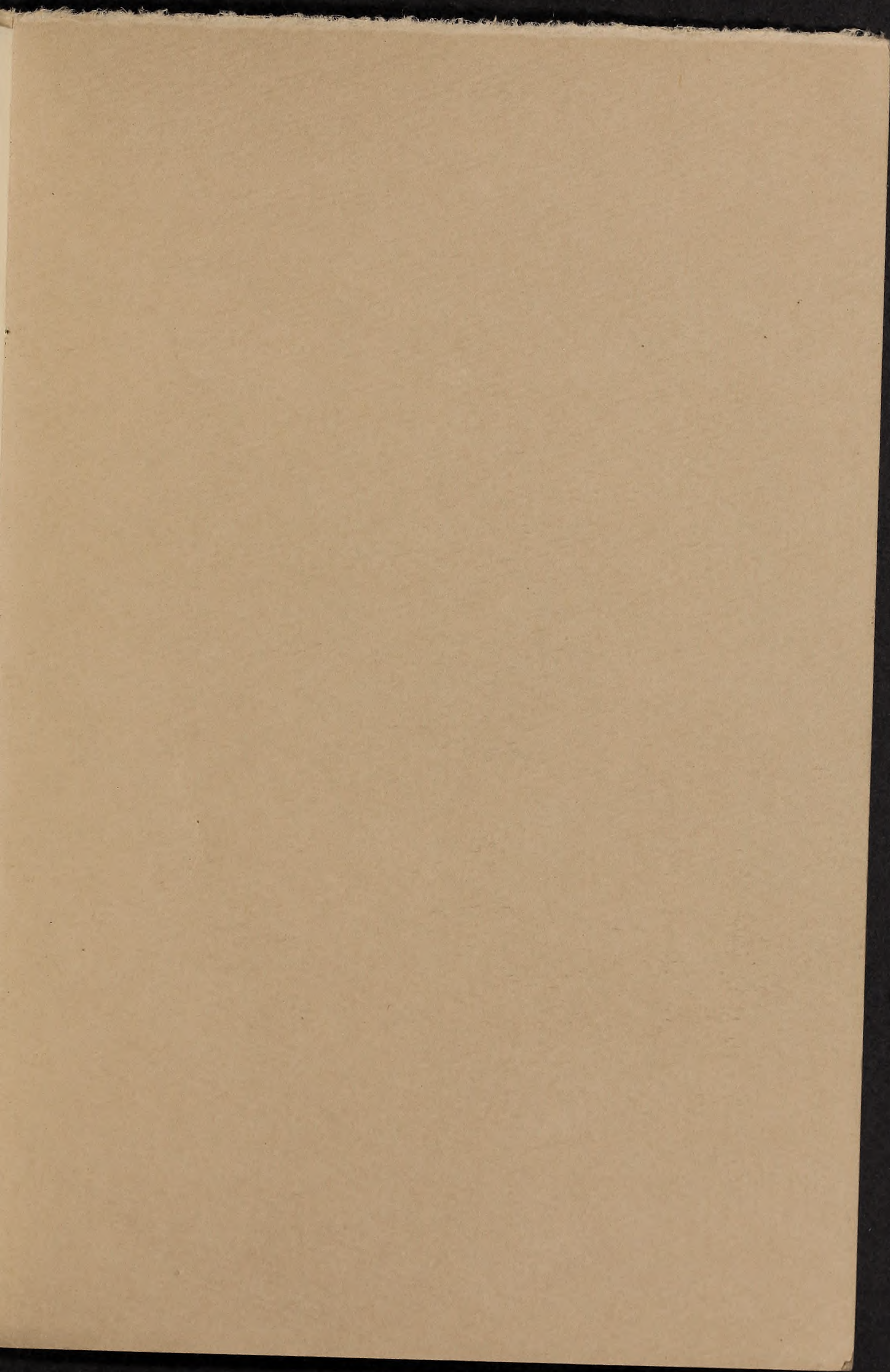
This wealth of musical experience has been possible only through the encouragement and generous support of Mrs. Coolidge.

Wholly as an unremunerated labor of love, and as an expression of deep appreciation of these occasions, the eminent English sculptor, Sir Henry Kitson, has executed a portrait of Mrs. Coolidge in relief, which is not only a faithful and convincing likeness, but also a work of inspired strength and nobility.

With characteristic generosity and devotion, Mr. Willeke has had this portrait cast in bronze and placed it upon the walls of the Temple of Chamber Music to bring constantly before these audiences the gracious spirit of this noble woman. No more appropriate place could be found for here began that amazing career of musical beneficences which has spread the gospel of chamber music from California to far Russia.

The bronze tablet happily describes Mrs. Coolidge as "The Fairy Godmother of Chamber Music". She is not only that; she is the Saint Cecelia of modern times. And here is her shrine.





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